

Oct. 30, '84

M.

Dear Dr. Goonesinghe,

Thank you for your letter and pamphlet of the meditation center. I have just sent off the akusala cetasikas and sobhana cetasikas to you. I am sorry that I cannot send you more copies for other people. I have made so many corrections and the length of the pages are different, and therefore it is not possible to make photocopies. But if anyone wants to copy it, it is all right. The problem is that there are 400 pages.

I am also sending you my third conversation on Dhamma.

I met our Charge d' affaires in Holland and I am not sure that he is interested in the Dhamma. He may show his interest in contacting you.

As to your question on vivisection, whether it is morally good or bad:

as you say, in one way it is killing, in another way it can be for the benefit for humans.

We are usually thinking of a 'whole situation', as I wrote in my last conversation. But what are the different cittas like, from moment to moment? What kind of citta arises when the hand which kills or injures, moves? Is it dāna, sīla or bhāvanā the citta at that moment is intent on? As I wrote, whenever we do something or ~~think about something~~ speak, or think about something, and the citta is at that moment not intent on dāna, sīla or bhāvanā, then it must be akusala. There can be other moments that one thinks with compassion about the benefit of sick people, but at the moment of killing or injuring there are cittas rooted in aversion, dosa.

When one has not become a sotāpanna there may be conditions to break the five precepts. As an ordinary human being one ~~does not~~ tries to keep them when one sees the benefit of keeping them. But at the same time one must be honest about oneself and realize that there are still conditions for neglecting them. By being aware one can also find out whether there is a slight degree of approving bad deeds or bad speech of other people. One can find out the degree of purity of sīla of oneself. Don't we like sensation? One must not ~~just~~ try to ignore such moments, but ~~we~~ realize them as conditioned realities, not self.

One may wonder: what should medical students do. The fact that one comes in situations in which it is difficult not to break the precepts is also conditioned, it is not by chance, nothing is by chance. But right understanding of different moments of citta can be developed.

When I am with Khun Sujin and the other Dhamma friends we discuss about the reality now, and I find that it always comes back to this moment now. Nāma now, rūpa now, which nāma, which rūpa. And they

appear one at a time, through one doorway at a time. How often do we repeat it, but it is really hard to realize it in practice. I tried to explain this in the Chapter on 'Stages of Insight' in my *Sobhana Cetasikas*. We know in theory that seeing and visible object are not the same, and that there can be awareness of one reality at a time. But, does it not seem that they are appearing together? It may take more than one life in order to realize *nāma* as *nāma* and *rūpa* as *rūpa*. And are we sure when a reality is known through the mind-door? Sound *x* is experienced both through the ear-door and through the mind-door, and hearing can only be experienced through the mind-door. Only at the first stage of 'tender insight' or *taruna vipassanā* is the difference between *nāma* and *rūpa* realized, through the mind-door and then becomes clear what the mind-door is, no more doubt. We have a notion what *nāma* is and what the mind-door is, but can we say that it is *paññā* which realizes it? It is better to know what one does not know yet.

We read about people who have realized impermanence, but, what arises and falls away, at the present moment? Is it *nāma* or *rūpa*? Is there *paññā* which clearly knows whether it is sound or hearing which appears at that moment? When there is a clear knowledge what *nāma* is *x* and what *rūpa*, *paññā* can realize at a later stage their arising and falling away. And this does not have to *x* be in a special place, where it is quiet. Where else but in daily life can one thoroughly know oneself?

I have found that people try to jump and consider later stages of insight, instead of considering what should be known first of all, and really, this is difficult enough. That is why we always discuss about different *nāmas* and *rūpas*, and the six doorways. Discussing realities and consideration of them in daily life can condition awareness. But if we think of a goal which is far off, is there not clinging or impatience? And there is also a ^{danger} ~~danger~~ that one thinks that one has realized impermanence ~~when~~ when one has not, but only thinks about it. That would really be a hindrance.

For instance, I read that someone wrote that she is a *sotāpanna* and that *nāma* and *rūpa* 'felt light and utterly equanimous'. A *sotāpanna* still has anger and other defilements, but he or she realizes them as not self, arisen because the ~~there~~ are still conditions for them. How can *dosa* feel light and equanimous? Or is she not realizing *akusala*? But can she then be a *sotāpanna*? All kinds of realities should be known as they are, also *akusala*.

I think that we should remember that *lobha* always tries to take over. 'Lobha is so crafty', Khun Sujin used to say. We hope to realize the truth, we have expectations. *Lobha* can lure us, and then we may make ourselves believe that we have achieved something. But we all are only beginners. It is fortunate that we could listen to the Buddha's teachings and by conditions are able to begin developing his Path.

with mettā,

Nina van Gorkom.